United Nations

Committee on Information

Report on the twenty-eighth session (24 April-5 May 2006)

General Assembly
Official Records
Sixty-first Session
Supplement No. 21 (A/61/21)

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Note

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

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Chapter I
Introduction

1. In its resolution 34/182 of 18 December 1979, the General Assembly decided to maintain the Committee to Review United Nations Public Information Policies and Activities, established by its resolution 33/115 C of 18 December 1979, which would be known as the Committee on Information, and to increase its membership from 41 to 66. In section I, paragraph 2, of resolution 34/182, the Assembly requested the Committee:

> "(a) To continue to examine United Nations public information policies and activities, in the light of the evolution of international relations, particularly during the past two decades, and of the imperatives of the establishment of the new international economic order and of a new world information and communication order;
>
> "(b) To evaluate and follow up the efforts made and the progress achieved by the United Nations system in the field of information and communications;
>
> "(c) To promote the establishment of a new, more just and more effective world information and communication order intended to strengthen peace and international understanding and based on the free circulation and wider and better balanced dissemination of information and to make recommendations thereon to the General Assembly;"

and requested the Committee and the Secretary-General to report to it at its thirty-fifth session.

2. In its resolution 35/201 of 16 December 1980, the General Assembly expressed its satisfaction with the work of the Committee, approved its report and the recommendations of its Ad Hoc Working Group,[1] reaffirmed the mandate given to the Committee in its resolution 34/182 and decided to increase the membership of the Committee from 66 to 67. At its organizational session in 1980, the Committee agreed that the principle of geographical rotation would be applied to all the officers of the Committee and that they should be elected for two-year terms of office.

3. The General Assembly, from its thirty-sixth to fifty-ninth sessions, took note of the reports of the Committee and adopted consensus resolutions. At its sixtieth session, the Assembly took note of the report of the Committee[2] and adopted consensus resolutions 60/109 A and B of 8 December 2005.

4. Over the years, the membership of the Committee has continued to grow. At its sixtieth session, the General Assembly decided, on the recommendation of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee), to increase the membership of the Committee from 107 to 108 and appointed Austria as a member of the Committee.

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[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 21* (A/35/21), annex, sect. V.

[2] Ibid., *Sixtieth Session, Supplement No. 21* (A/60/21).

5. The Committee is composed of the following Member States:

Algeria
Angola
Argentina
Armenia
Austria
Azerbaijan
Bangladesh
Belarus
Belgium
Belize
Benin
Brazil
Bulgaria
Burkina Faso
Burundi
Cape Verde
Chile
China
Colombia
Congo
Costa Rica
Côte d'Ivoire
Croatia
Cuba
Cyprus
Czech Republic
Democratic People's Republic of Korea
Democratic Republic of the Congo
Denmark
Ecuador
Egypt
El Salvador
Ethiopia
Finland
France
Gabon
Georgia
Germany
Ghana
Greece
Guatemala
Guinea
Guyana
Hungary
Iceland
India
Indonesia
Iran (Islamic Republic of)
Ireland
Israel
Italy
Jamaica
Japan
Jordan
Kazakhstan
Kenya
Lebanon
Liberia
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya
Luxembourg
Madagascar
Malta
Mexico
Monaco
Mongolia
Morocco
Mozambique
Nepal
Netherlands
Niger
Nigeria
Pakistan
Peru
Philippines
Poland
Portugal
Republic of Korea
Qatar
Republic of Moldova
Romania
Russian Federation
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
Saudi Arabia
Senegal
Singapore
Slovakia
Solomon Islands
Somalia
South Africa
Spain
Sri Lanka
Sudan
Suriname
Switzerland
Syrian Arab Republic

Togo
Trinidad and Tobago
Tunisia
Turkey
Ukraine
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
United Republic of Tanzania
United States of America
Uruguay
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
Viet Nam
Yemen
Zimbabwe

Chapter II
Organizational questions

A. Opening of the session

6. The organizational meeting of the twenty-eighth session of the Committee on Information was held on 24 April 2006 at United Nations Headquarters. The session was opened by the Chairman of the Committee, Ambassador Mihnea Ioan Motoc (Romania).

B. Election of officers

7. Following the departure of Sebastião Filipe Coelho Ferreira, Vice-Chairman (Portugal) at the end of his tour of duty at United Nations Headquarters, Rudolf Christen (Switzerland) was nominated by the Group of Western European and other States to serve as a Vice-Chairman in his place for the remainder of the 2005-2006 term of office. The officers of the Committee on Information for the period 2005-2006 are thus as follows:

Chairman:
Mihnea Ioan Motoc (Romania)

Vice-Chairpersons:
Souad Elalaoui (Morocco)
Rudolf Christen (Switzerland)
Marcelo Suárez Salvia (Argentina)

Rapporteur:
Muhammad A. Muhith (Bangladesh)

C. Adoption of the agenda and programme of work

8. At its organizational meeting, the Committee adopted the following agenda and programme of work (A/AC.198/2006/6):

1. Opening of the session.
2. Adoption of the agenda and programme of work.
3. Statement by the Chairman.
4. Admission of new members.
5. Statement by the Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information.
6. General debate.
7. Consideration of reports submitted by the Secretary-General.
8. Commemoration of World Press Freedom Day.
9. Open-ended working group of the Committee on Information.

10. Consideration and adoption of the report of the Committee to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session.

9. The Committee held the substantive meetings of its twenty-eighth session at United Nations Headquarters from 24 April to 5 May 2006.

10. For its consideration of agenda item 7, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General on the continued rationalization of the network of United Nations information centres (A/AC.198/2006/1);

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on the modernization and integrated management of United Nations libraries: update on new strategic directions (A/AC.198/2006/2);

(c) Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations website: recent developments and progress towards parity among the official languages (A/AC.198/2006/3);

(d) Report of the Secretary-General on assessing the effectiveness of United Nations public information products and activities: the results of a three-year evaluation project (A/AC.198/2006/4 and Corr.1);

(e) Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information (A/AC.198/2006/5).

D. Observers

11. The following Member States took part in the session as observers: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Dominican Republic, Lesotho, Tajikistan and Thailand. The Holy See also participated as an observer.

12. Representatives of the following specialized agencies also participated as observers: World Health Organization and World Intellectual Property Organization.

Chapter III
General debate

13. Statements in the general debate were made by the following States members of the Committee on Information: Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Austria (on behalf of the European Union and those countries aligning themselves with its statement), Bangladesh, Belarus, China, Congo, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, Guyana (on behalf of the Rio Group), Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Israel, Japan, Kenya, Mongolia, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Rwanda, South Africa (on behalf of the Group of 77 and China), Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen. A statement was also made by Sao Tome and Principe, an observer, on behalf of the Community of Portuguese-speaking countries.

14. The general debate was preceded by statements by the Chairman of the Committee and the Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information, Department of Public Information.

15. In taking up the substantive questions before the Committee, speakers emphasized the central role of the United Nations in global affairs and of the Department of Public Information as its public voice. Underlining the important role played by the Department in providing accurate, impartial, comprehensive and timely information to Member States, one speaker, representing a large group, commended the Department for projecting a positive public image of the Organization. The group expressed its particular appreciation for the work of the Department in promoting, through its campaigns, issues of importance to the international community such as sustainable development, decolonization, the dialogue among civilizations and culture of peace and tolerance, the rights of women and children, HIV/AIDS and development on the African continent. Another speaker representing a large group commended the Department's efforts in raising global awareness of the above issues, as well as of natural disasters, threats to international peace and security, human rights and matters concerning development. He encouraged similar efforts with respect to the process of reform of the United Nations. Another speaker, who also spoke on behalf of a large group, commended the Department for its efforts to develop a more strategic approach in promoting global awareness and greater understanding of the work of the United Nations in priority areas. In that regard, his group welcomed the identification by the Department of three strategic goals to maximize the effectiveness of its communications work: pursuing well-defined and targeted delivery of information, exploiting ongoing advances in information and communications technologies and building partnerships with civil society. Referring to the Department's reorientation, he said that the measures taken over the past three years should make it possible to further rationalize and optimize the activities of the Department, to maximize the efficient use of its resources and to enhance the visibility and impact of its operations. Another speaker, also representing a large group, acknowledged the importance of the efforts made by the Department and expressed appreciation for those efforts, particularly in view of the difficulties it faced owing to limited resources. The Department's successful promotion of the 2005 World Summit was referred to by a number of speakers. One speaker, calling the Summit a true test for the Department, said that the work of the website operation and the audio-visual and photographic services deserved only positive evaluation.

16. Several speakers commented on the renewal of the Department through structural overhaul. One speaker said that, as a result of the changes, the Department was making the best use of available information and communication technologies, it had a more strategic orientation, its messages were sharper and its target audiences were more clearly defined. Another speaker welcomed the Department's new strategic approach, including its emphasis on using information and communication technology and building partnerships with civil society, especially because the Department had to meet its goals with limited resources while functioning in an often unhelpful environment.

17. Several speakers pointed to the challenges that still lay ahead. One speaker, representing a large group, stressed the importance of a consistent message between the Department and any other entity which provided public information on the United Nations. As part of the accountability and transparency of the Organization, Member States should be able to learn first about important events affecting the United Nations through the official channels, including the Department of Public Information, rather than through private media. He emphasized that the General Assembly had a Charter-mandated role of oversight on matters affecting the Secretariat and resources of the Organization, and that the interaction between the media and the Secretariat did not replace the Charter requirement for the Secretariat to report to Member States through the General Assembly. The biggest challenge for the Department, one speaker said, was telling the United Nations story in a compelling manner and with conviction to the widest possible audience. The most daunting task was to reach out to the widest possible audience in developing countries which otherwise lacked the resources and technical means to access the story. Another speaker pointed out that the amount of information the Department produced sometimes negatively affected the quality of its presentation. Commenting that press releases were sometimes written in a dry official language, he advised the Department to pay more attention to both the language and style of presentation of materials for the media.

18. Several speakers underlined the importance of promoting the dialogue among civilizations. According to one speaker, much of the violence prevailing in today's world was attributable to prejudice born out of misunderstanding, miscommunication or simply a lack of communication. The Department of Public Information could play an important role in bridging this gap by fostering understanding, tolerance and cooperation among peoples of different religions and beliefs. To this end, the "Unlearning Intolerance" seminar series initiated by the Department was commended by several speakers. One speaker, while welcoming the series, considered that the Department should also showcase examples of its success in promoting the dialogue, reflecting the rich diversity of world civilizations, cultures and religions.

19. Another speaker, calling upon the Department to pay particular attention to the programmes and activities related to the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development, suggested the provision of the necessary objective material to acquaint the international community with the achievements made within the framework of that initiative, the challenges it faced and the priorities for which urgent material and technical assistance were required. A number of speakers called for extending increased support to the Palestinian people, including through the Department's training programme for Palestinian media practitioners. Voicing a different view, another speaker argued that the Palestinian information programme,

which was based on a General Assembly resolution and included an annual seminar, promoted a one-sided narrative. However, he recognized the Department's efforts to make its seminars and materials as objective as possible. Another speaker referred to the General Assembly resolution on the Rwanda genocide and urged closer consultation between the Department and Member States in the implementation of the resolution. Preventing further acts of genocide, not only in Rwanda but elsewhere, depended on collective action, consultation and cooperation. The Department had an important role to play in that regard but should, in the future, seek the views of concerned Member States in order for such undertakings to succeed.

20. A number of speakers commented on the Department's role in peacekeeping operations and expressed appreciation for its growing cooperation with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. One speaker encouraged the Department to devise and implement a comprehensive communications strategy that highlighted success stories of peacekeeping and the role of peacekeepers in their areas of operation. By appropriately projecting the objectives of peacekeeping operations in various societies, the Department could go a long way towards creating goodwill and a better image for the United Nations, another speaker noted. Another speaker emphasized the importance of communication, transparency and evaluation in the planning of peacekeeping operations. Expressing satisfaction at the steps taken to help address the pressing issue of sexual exploitation and abuse in United Nations peacekeeping missions, one speaker said that his Government would like to see further improvement in the Department's coordination with other substantive offices and agencies, particularly the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

21. The issue of the digital divide drew close scrutiny by several speakers. Referring to the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society, held in Tunis in November 2005, one speaker emphasized that the outcome of the Summit had provided for specific initiatives to be taken at all levels to assist in bridging the digital divide and placing information and communication technologies in the service of development. Another speaker expressed regret that in spite of efforts to take the scientific and technical advances in information and communication technologies to various parts of the world, the gap between developed and developing countries was increasing.

22. Several speakers commented on the Department's website operation. One speaker, speaking on behalf of a large group, commended the Department for its efforts to attract further users through a redesign of the top-level pages and a new search function. The speaker supported the effort made by the Department to make use of all facets of the Internet's growing multimedia capability by including more webcasts and radio files in numerous languages among its online offerings. The increasing attention paid to the needs of persons with disabilities was also greatly appreciated. Another speaker, speaking on behalf of a large group, expressed the appreciation of his group for the measures taken thus far to boost the accessibility of persons with vision and hearing disabilities to the United Nations websites, and encouraged the Department of Public Information to continue working with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, as well as experts in the field, to achieve greater progress in that area. Referring to the increasing use of the United Nations website, the speaker urged that additional resources be allocated to accelerate action with respect to parity among the official languages of the Organization and the adoption of long-term strategies to strengthen coherence.

Another speaker, commending the Department for redesigning the United Nations website, welcomed its plan to further modernize the website architecture so as to provide even faster access to features that users actually sought out. He welcomed the e-mail service offered by the United Nations News Centre and proposed that the possibility of subscribing to the service from the United Nations home page be considered.

23. Several speakers commented on the multilingual nature of the United Nations website and expressed appreciation for the efforts made to narrow the gap among the various languages. However, some concerns were also expressed. One speaker, representing a large group, said the members of his group remained concerned at the continuing disparity in the treatment accorded the official languages and urged the Department to continue its efforts to attain parity among all official languages on the United Nations website, in accordance with the relevant General Assembly resolution. Another speaker noted that the Arabic page on the website still needed further material and human support, despite the efforts made by those in charge. He emphasized the need to make greater efforts to achieve full parity on the website and the equal distribution of human resources, taking into consideration the fact that Arabic was written in non-Latin letters. Another speaker underlined that existing language disparities on the Organization's websites could also be reduced through greater cooperation between the Department of Public Information and academic institutions, in addition to continued collaboration between the Department, the Working Group on Internet Matters and content-providing offices. Another speaker, while recognizing the Department's efforts to ensure parity among the official languages on the website, argued that the proposed improvements could not be undertaken simultaneously. Therefore, the Department could make more efficient use of its limited resources by giving greater priority to enhancing the website in the languages that received the most traffic.

24. The importance of the traditional means of communications, especially radio, was emphasized by several speakers. Representing a large group, one speaker reminded the Department that, for many developing countries, the traditional means of communication remained the primary sources for obtaining information. The speaker encouraged the Department to continue building partnerships with local, national and regional radio broadcasters so as to extend the United Nations message to all corners of the world in an accurate, impartial and effective way. Several speakers underscored the importance of local language broadcasts, including Bengali, Kiswahili and Urdu. Another speaker emphasized the effective work of the United Nations Radio live broadcast and commended the Department for launching a number of special initiatives, including the project entitled "60 years in 60 minutes" by the United Nations Radio Russian section.

25. The question of further rationalization of the network of United Nations information centres was commented on by most speakers. A number of speakers reiterated the view that the presence of information centres in developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, strengthened the flow of information in those countries and assisted them in addressing the disparities they faced. One speaker representing a large group said that any proposal for further rationalization of information centres must be carried out in close consultation with the host countries, other countries served by the centres and the regions involved, and must take into account the geographical, linguistic and technological characteristics of the various regions. He also advocated the allocation of adequate resources to ensure

the effective functioning and strengthening of information centres in developing countries. Those views were shared by several speakers, including one who said that the United Nations information centres dotting the globe were the real interface between the United Nations and the global community, and therefore the centres, particularly those in the developing countries, including and perhaps especially the least developed countries, should be strengthened.

26. Another speaker, who spoke on behalf of a large group, expressed support for the Department's efforts to improve its working methods, but pointed out that the group was convinced that the regionalization of operations was not a viable option for enhancing the United Nations information and communication machinery. Referring to the report of the Secretary-General on the continued rationalization of the network of United Nations information centres (A/AC.198/2006/1), the speaker argued that the dramatic change in the pattern of doing business and of serving the media and civil society in a large geographical area that was distant from a centralized location had had the adverse effect of reducing the Organization's visibility. Therefore he urged that future action in that area be guided by the lessons learned from the rationalization process in Western Europe. Clearly, the successful rationalization of the information centres necessitated increased dialogue with host countries and greater sensitivity to unique regional needs and demands.

27. Another speaker, speaking on behalf of another large group, recalled that the countries belonging to his group had lent their full support to the proposals made by the Secretary-General in 2002 for regional hubs, hoping for real medium- and long-term benefits to the Organization and the peoples of the world. That decision had forced a number of European countries to take the tough decision to close offices in their capitals. The members of his group had expected the regionalization plan to have advanced more vigorously than it had been, and had also expected other Member States and regional groups to take equally tough decisions on information centres in their own countries if circumstances so warranted. Stressing his group's commitment to efforts to create a network that more effectively addressed the needs of its customers, he encouraged the Secretariat to make every effort in that regard. He added that the rationalization of the network of United Nations information centres could and should include improving the centres' work through common terms of reference and in-depth evaluation and transparent budgetary planning. The Department should thoroughly evaluate information centres in cooperation with the Office of Internal Oversight Services, and provide a detailed report to Member States.

28. One speaker representing a large group of countries and another delegation renewed the call for the setting up of an information centre in Luanda for the Portuguese-speaking African community. Recalling that the Government of Angola had offered rent-free premises to host the centre, he said the costs involved in setting up and running the office would pale in comparison to the benefits to be obtained from it by the Portuguese-speaking African community. He argued that the regional approach inherent in the proposal for an information centre in Luanda coincided squarely with the objectives of the rationalization process currently embraced by the Department of Public Information.

29. Another speaker reminded the Committee that the rationalization of information centres was not an end itself but rather a means of making United Nations information accessible to a greater number of clients without expending

additional resources. In developed countries, where the Internet was widely used, and especially in countries in which one of the six official languages was spoken, the United Nations website would soon obviate the need for information centres. Therefore, information centres would add value only in countries in which none of the official languages was spoken or where Internet services were not widely available.

30. Several speakers, including one who spoke on behalf of a large group, welcomed the new strategic orientation of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library, including its redesignation as the Dag Hammarskjöld Library and Knowledge Sharing Centre. One speaker, speaking on behalf of a large group, commended the Department of Public Information for making a major effort to implement new activities and foster a culture of management and sharing of knowledge while streamlining traditional library activities. Agreeing with the Secretary-General, he said that the key to effective change in library services lay in the training of staff and in the improvement of internal communications. Another speaker said that his country was convinced of the benefits of the ongoing transformation of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library but stressed that such positive changes should be accompanied by enhanced staff training. Welcoming the recent decision to update the status of the network of communities which shared knowledge, another speaker asked for the Department's opinion on the possible implications for the operation of the United Nations library network as a whole.

31. The new culture of evaluation, based on an annual programme impact review of the Department's products and activities, was welcomed by many speakers. Expressing the view of a large group, one speaker commended the Department for its efforts to target products, services and activities, both in terms of relevance and quality. Since successful communication rested on the ever deeper knowledge of audiences and their expectations, the systematic impact reviews conducted by the Department over the past three years were important instruments for gauging whether United Nations information met the demands of its users. He encouraged the Department to persevere in its efforts to deepen the culture of evaluation in every aspect of its activities, including products and services. Another speaker stated that the Department needed to appraise and adjust its activities in a timely manner. He stressed that training staff to review continually the impact of their work was a natural complement to the emphasis on evaluation. It was good that the Department of Public Information was constantly exploring new ideas in that regard.

32. At the conclusion of the general debate, the Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information provided an in-depth response to a wide range of questions raised by delegations during the debate.

Chapter IV

Preparation and adoption of the report of the Committee to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session

33. At its sixth plenary meeting, the Committee on Information proceeded to adopt by consensus its draft report, including two draft resolutions and a draft decision. A text, submitted by the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, formed the basis of negotiations for a draft resolution, which involved two negotiating groups, the Group of 77 and China and the European Union, as well as other Member States.

34. The Committee agreed to resume its twenty-eighth session at a date to be determined, with the specific purpose of reviewing the strategic framework of the Department of Public Information for the biennium 2008-2009 and providing the Secretary-General with a related recommendation which would be forwarded to the Committee for Programme and Coordination for consideration at its forty-sixth session, to be held from 14 August to 8 September 2006. It was agreed that, subject to the approval of the Committee on Conferences, the Committee would hold one additional meeting with interpretation in all six official languages, provided on an as available basis, with minimal documentation envisaged. On this basis, the Committee was informed that there would be no additional financial implications for holding this session. The exact date would be determined by the Department of Public Information in consultation with the Department of General Assembly and Conference Management, and conveyed to the members of the Committee in due course.

Draft resolution A
Information in the service of humanity

The General Assembly,

Taking note of the comprehensive and important report of the Committee on Information,[3]

Also taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on questions relating to information,[4]

Urges all countries, organizations of the United Nations system as a whole and all others concerned, reaffirming their commitment to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and to the principles of freedom of the press and freedom of information, as well as to those of the independence, pluralism and diversity of the media, deeply concerned by the disparities existing between developed and developing countries and the consequences of every kind arising from those disparities that affect the capability of the public, private or other media and individuals in developing countries to disseminate information and communicate their views and their cultural and ethical values through endogenous cultural production, as well as to ensure the diversity of sources and their free access to information, and recognizing the call in this context for what in the United Nations

[3] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-first Session, Supplement No. 21* (A/61/21).
[4] A/61/__.

and at various international forums has been termed "a new world information and communication order, seen as an evolving and continuous process":

(a) To cooperate and interact with a view to reducing existing disparities in information flows at all levels by increasing assistance for the development of communication infrastructures and capabilities in developing countries, with due regard for their needs and the priorities attached to such areas by those countries, and in order to enable them and the public, private or other media in developing countries to develop their own information and communication policies freely and independently and increase the participation of media and individuals in the communication process, and to ensure a free flow of information at all levels;

(b) To ensure for journalists the free and effective performance of their professional tasks and condemn resolutely all attacks against them;

(c) To provide support for the continuation and strengthening of practical training programmes for broadcasters and journalists from public, private and other media in developing countries;

(d) To enhance regional efforts and cooperation among developing countries, as well as cooperation between developed and developing countries, to strengthen communication capacities and to improve the media infrastructure and communication technology in the developing countries, especially in the areas of training and dissemination of information;

(e) To aim at, in addition to bilateral cooperation, providing all possible support and assistance to the developing countries and their media, public, private or other, with due regard to their interests and needs in the field of information and to action already adopted within the United Nations system, including:

(i) The development of the human and technical resources that are indispensable for the improvement of information and communication systems in developing countries and support for the continuation and strengthening of practical training programmes, such as those already operating under both public and private auspices throughout the developing world;

(ii) The creation of conditions that will enable developing countries and their media, public, private or other, to have, by using their national and regional resources, the communication technology suited to their national needs, as well as the necessary programme material, especially for radio and television broadcasting;

(iii) Assistance in establishing and promoting telecommunication links at the subregional, regional and interregional levels, especially among developing countries;

(iv) The facilitation, as appropriate, of access by the developing countries to advanced communication technology available on the open market;

(f) To provide full support for the International Programme for the Development of Communication[5] of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, which should support both public and private media.

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[5] See United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Records of the General Conference, Twenty-first Session, Belgrade, 23 September-28 October 1980*, vol. 1, *Resolutions*, sect. III.4, resolution 4/21.

Draft resolution B
United Nations public information policies and activities

The General Assembly,

Emphasizing the role of the Committee on Information as its main subsidiary body mandated to make recommendations to it relating to the work of the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat,

Reaffirming its resolution 13 (I) of 13 February 1946, establishing the Department, which states in paragraph 2 of annex I that "the activities of the Department should be so organized and directed as to promote to the greatest possible extent an informed understanding of the work and purposes of the United Nations among the peoples of the world",

Emphasizing that the contents of public information and communications should be placed at the heart of the strategic management of the United Nations and that a culture of communications and transparency should permeate all levels of the Organization, as a means of fully informing the peoples of the world of the aims and activities of the United Nations, in accordance with the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, in order to create broad-based global support for the United Nations,

Stressing that the primary mission of the Department of Public Information is to provide, through its outreach activities, accurate, impartial, comprehensive, timely and relevant information to the public on the tasks and responsibilities of the United Nations in order to strengthen international support for the activities of the Organization with the greatest transparency,

Recalling the comprehensive review of the work of the Department of Public Information, requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 56/253 of 24 December 2001, as well as the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change",[6] and Assembly resolutions 57/300 of 20 December 2002 and 60/109 of 8 December 2005, which provided an opportunity to take due steps to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the Department and to maximize the use of its resources,

Expressing its concern that the gap in the information and communication technologies between the developed and the developing countries has continued to widen and that vast segments of the population in developing countries are not benefiting from the present information and communication technologies and, in this regard, underlining the necessity of rectifying the imbalances of the present development of information and communication technologies in order to make it more just, equitable and effective,

Recognizing that developments in the information and communication technologies open vast new opportunities for economic growth and social development and can play an important role in the eradication of poverty in developing countries, and, at the same time, emphasizing that the development of these technologies poses challenges and risks and could lead to the further widening of disparities between and within countries,

[6] A/57/387 and Corr.1.

Recalling its resolution 59/309 of 22 June 2005 on multilingualism, and emphasizing the importance of making appropriate use of the official languages of the United Nations in the activities of the Department of Public Information, aiming to eliminate the disparity between the use of English and the five other official languages,

Welcoming Austria to membership in the Committee on Information,

I
Introduction

1. *Reaffirms* its resolution 13 (I), in which it established the Department of Public Information, and all other relevant General Assembly resolutions related to the activities of the Department, and requests the Secretary-General, in respect of the public information policies and activities of the United Nations, to continue to implement fully the recommendations contained in paragraph 2 of its resolution 48/44 B of 10 December 1993 and other mandates as established by the General Assembly;

2. *Also reaffirms* that the United Nations remains the indispensable foundation of a peaceful and just world and that its voice must be heard in a clear and effective manner, and emphasizes the essential role of the Department of Public Information in this context, the activities of which should be so organized and directed as to promote to the greatest possible extent an informed understanding of the work and purposes of the United Nations among the peoples of the world;

3. *Stresses* the importance of the clear and timely provision of information by the Secretariat to Member States, upon their request, within the framework of existing mandates and procedures;

4. *Reaffirms* the central role of the Committee on Information in United Nations public information policies and activities, including the prioritization of those activities, and decides that recommendations relating to the programme of the Department of Public Information shall originate, to the extent possible, in the Committee and shall be considered by the Committee;

5. *Requests* the Department of Public Information, following the priorities laid down by the General Assembly in its resolution 59/275 of 23 December 2004, and guided by the United Nations Millennium Declaration[7] to pay particular attention to such major issues as the eradication of poverty, conflict prevention, sustainable development, human rights, the HIV/AIDS epidemic, combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and the needs of the African continent;

6. *Also requests* the Department of Public Information to pay particular attention to progress in implementing the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, and the outcomes of the major related United Nations summits and conferences in carrying out its activities;

7. *Reaffirms* the need to enhance the technological infrastructure of the Department of Public Information on a continuous basis in order to widen its outreach and improve the United Nations website;

[7] See resolution 55/2.

8. *Recognizes* the important work carried out by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and its collaboration with news agencies and broadcasting organizations in developing countries in disseminating information on priority issues, and encourages a continued collaboration between the Department of Public Information and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in the promotion of culture and in the fields of education and communication, bridging the existing gap between the developed and the developing countries;

II
General activities of the Department of Public Information

9. *Notes* the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information[8] and requests the Secretary-General to continue reporting to the Committee on Information on the activities of the Department at successive sessions;

10. *Acknowledges* that the Department of Public Information has concluded its collaborative project with the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the systematic evaluation of public information products and activities and notes with appreciation the report of the Secretary-General on the final outcome of this three-year project;[9]

11. *Requests* the Department of Public Information, while acknowledging its commitment to a culture of evaluation, to continue to evaluate its products and activities with the objective of improving their effectiveness, including through interdepartmental consultations;

12. *Reaffirms* that the Department of Public Information is the focal point for information policies of the United Nations and the primary news centre for information about the United Nations, its activities and those of the Secretary-General;

13. *Also reaffirms* the importance of more effective coordination between the Department of Public Information and the Office of the Spokesman for the Secretary-General, and requests the Secretary-General to ensure consistency in the messages of the Organization;

14. *Further reaffirms* that the Department of Public Information must prioritize its work programme while respecting existing mandates and in line with regulation 5.6 of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation,[10] to focus its message and better concentrate its efforts and, as a function of performance management, to match its programmes with the needs of its target audiences, on the basis of improved feedback and evaluation mechanisms;

15. *Notes with appreciation* the efforts of the Department of Public Information to continue to publicize the work and decisions of the General Assembly, requests the Department to continue to enhance its working relationship

[8] A/AC.198/2006/5.

[9] A/AC.198/2006/4 and Corr.1.

[10] ST/SGB/2000/8.

with the Office of the President of the General Assembly and requests the Secretary-General to report thereon to the Committee on Information at its twenty-ninth session;

16. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to exert all efforts to ensure that publications and other information services of the Secretariat, including the United Nations website and the United Nations News Service, contain comprehensive, objective and equitable information about the issues before the Organization and that they maintain editorial independence, impartiality, accuracy and full consistency with resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly;

17. *Requests* the Department of Public Information to ensure that United Nations publications are produced in a cost-effective manner and to continue to coordinate closely with all other entities, including all other departments of the Secretariat, funds and programmes of the United Nations system, in order to avoid duplication, within their respective mandates, in the issuance of United Nations publications;

18. *Emphasizes* that the Department of Public Information should maintain and improve its activities in the areas of special interest to developing countries and, where appropriate, other countries with special needs, and that the Department's activities should contribute to bridging the existing gap between the developing and the developed countries in the crucial field of public information and communications;

19. *Also emphasizes* that the Secretary-General should continue to strengthen the coordination between the Department of Public Information and all other entities, including all other departments of the Secretariat, funds and programmes of the United Nations system, in the context of its client-oriented approach and to identify target audiences and develop information programmes and media strategies for priority issues, and emphasizes that public information capacities and activities in other departments should function under the guidance of the Department;

20. *Notes with appreciation* the continued efforts of the Department of Public Information in issuing daily press releases, and requests the Department to continue providing this service to both Member States and representatives of the media, while considering possible means of improving their production process and streamlining their format, structure and length, keeping in mind the views of Member States;

21. *Also notes with appreciation* the efforts of the Department of Public Information to work at the local level with other organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to enhance the coordination of their communication activities, and requests the Secretary-General to report to the Committee on Information at its twenty-ninth session on progress achieved in this regard and on the activities of the United Nations Communications Group;

22. *Calls upon* the Department of Public Information to continue to examine its policies and activities regarding the durable preservation of its radio, television and photographic archives, to take action, within existing resources, to ensure that such archives are preserved and are accessible and to report to the Committee on Information at its twenty-ninth session;

Multilingualism and public information

23. *Emphasizes* the importance of making appropriate use of all the official languages of the United Nations in all the activities of the Department of Public Information, including in presentations to the Committee on Information, with the aim of eliminating the disparity between the use of English and the five other official languages;

24. *Also emphasizes* the importance of ensuring the full, equitable treatment of all the official languages of the United Nations in all the activities of the Department of Public Information and, in this regard, reaffirms its request to the Secretary-General to ensure that the Department has appropriate staffing capacity in all the official languages of the United Nations to undertake all its activities;

25. *Stresses* the importance of fully implementing its resolution 52/214 of 22 December 1997, in section C of which it requested the Secretary-General to ensure that the texts of all new public documents in all six official languages and information materials of the United Nations are made available daily through the United Nations website and are accessible to Member States without delay;

26. *Welcomes* the ongoing efforts of the Department of Public Information to enhance multilingualism in its activities, and requests the Department to continue its endeavours in this regard;

27. *Reiterates* paragraph 4 of section C of its resolution 52/214, and requests the Secretary-General to continue towards completion of the task of uploading all important older United Nations documents on the United Nations website in all six official languages on a priority basis, so that these archives are also available to Member States through that medium;

28. *Reaffirms* that it is important that the Secretary-General include in future programme budget proposals for the Department of Public Information the importance of using all six official languages in its activities;

29. *Welcomes* the work done by the network of United Nations information centres in favour of the publication of United Nations information materials and the translation of important documents in languages other than the United Nations official languages, with a view to reaching the widest possible spectrum of audiences and extending the United Nations message to all the corners of the world in order to strengthen international support for the activities of the Organization;

Bridging the digital divide

30. *Recalls* with satisfaction General Assembly resolution 60/252 of 27 March 2006, in which it endorsed the Tunis Commitment and the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society and proclaimed 17 May annual World Information Society Day, and also recalls the adoption of the Declaration of Principles and the Plan of Action[11] at the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society, held in Geneva from 10 to 12 December 2003, and in this regard requests the Department of Public Information to contribute to the celebration of this event and to play a role in raising awareness of the possibilities that the use of the Internet and

[11] See A/C.2/59/3.

other information and communication technologies can bring to societies and economies, as well as of ways to bridge the digital divide;

31. *Calls upon* the Department of Public Information to contribute to raising the awareness of the international community of the importance of the implementation of the outcome document of the World Summit on the Information Society;

Network of United Nations information centres

32. *Emphasizes* the importance of the network of United Nations information centres in enhancing the public image of the United Nations and in disseminating messages on the United Nations to local populations, especially in developing countries;

33. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the continued further rationalization of the network of United Nations information centres,[12] and, in this regard, recognizes the constraints of further regionalization as described in paragraph 25 of the report;

34. *Stresses* the importance of rationalizing the network of United Nations information centres, and, in this regard, requests the Secretary-General to continue to make proposals in this direction, including through the redeployment of resources where necessary, and to report to the Committee on Information at its twenty-ninth session;

35. *Reaffirms* that rationalization of United Nations information centres must be carried out on a case-by-case basis in consultation with all concerned Member States in which existing information centres are located, the countries served by those information centres and other interested countries in the region, taking into consideration the distinctive characteristics of each region;

36. *Recognizes* that the network of United Nations information centres, especially in developing countries, should continue to enhance its impact and activities, including through strategic communications support, and calls upon the Secretary-General to submit a report on the implementation of this approach to the Committee on Information at its twenty-ninth session;

37. *Stresses* the importance of taking into account the special needs and requirements of developing countries in the field of information and communications technology for the effective flow of information in those countries;

38. *Also stresses* that the Department of Public Information, through its network of United Nations information centres, should continue to promote public awareness of and mobilize support for the work of the United Nations at the local level, bearing in mind that information in local languages has the strongest impact on local populations;

39. *Further stresses* the importance of efforts to strengthen the outreach activities of the United Nations to those Member States remaining outside the network of United Nations information centres, and encourages the Secretary-General, within the context of rationalization, to extend the services of the network of United Nations information centres to those Member States;

[12] A/AC.198/2005/3.

40. *Stresses* that the Department of Public Information should continue to review the allocation of both staff and financial resources to the United Nations information centres in developing countries, emphasizing the needs of the least developed countries;

41. *Encourages* the network of United Nations information centres to continue to develop web pages in local languages, also encourages the Department of Public Information to provide resources and technical facilities, in particular to those information centres whose web pages are not yet operational, and further encourages host countries to respond to the needs of the information centres;

42. *Takes note* of the proposal by the Secretary-General to work closely with the Governments concerned to explore the possibility of identifying rent-free premises, while taking into account the economic condition of the host countries and bearing in mind that such support should not be a substitute for the full allocation of financial resources for the information centres in the context of the programme budget of the United Nations;

43. *Also takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General containing the discussion regarding the creation of a United Nations information centre in Luanda[13] to address the special needs of Portuguese-speaking African countries, welcomes the offer made by the Government of Angola to host the centre as part of the network of United Nations information centres by providing rent-free premises, and encourages the Secretary-General, within the context of rationalization, to take all necessary measures to accommodate those needs;

III
Strategic communications services

44. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information[14] and, in this context, reaffirms that the Department of Public Information is the principal department responsible for the implementation of information strategies, as mandated;

45. *Reaffirms* the role of the strategic communications services in devising and disseminating United Nations messages by developing communications strategies, in close collaboration with the substantive departments, United Nations funds and programmes and the specialized agencies, in full compliance with the legislative mandates;

Promotional campaigns

46. *Recognizes* that promotional campaigns aimed at supporting special sessions and international conferences of the United Nations are part of the core responsibility of the Department of Public Information, welcomes the efforts of the Department to examine creative ways in which it can organize and implement these campaigns in partnership with the substantive departments concerned, using the United Nations Millennium Declaration[7] as its guide, and requests the Department to pay particular attention to progress in implementing the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, and

[13] Ibid., para. 40.
[14] A/AC.198/2006/5.

the outcomes of the major related United Nations summits and conferences in carrying out its activities;

47. *Appreciates* the work of the Department of Public Information in promoting, through its campaigns, issues of importance to the international community, such as United Nations reform, the eradication of poverty, conflict prevention, sustainable development, disarmament, decolonization, human rights, including the rights of women and children and of persons with disabilities, strategic coordination in humanitarian relief, especially in natural disasters and other crises, HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and other diseases, the needs of the African continent, combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, as well as dialogue among civilizations, the culture of peace and tolerance and the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster, and requests the Department, in cooperation with the countries concerned and with the relevant organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, to continue to take appropriate measures to enhance world public awareness of these and other important global issues;

48. *Invites* the Department of Public Information to continue to work within the United Nations Communications Group to coordinate the preparation and implementation of communication strategies with the heads of information of the agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system, and requests the Secretary-General to report to the Committee on Information at its twenty-ninth session on the activities of the Group;

49. *Stresses* the need to continue the renewed emphasis in support of Africa's development, in particular by the Department of Public Information, in order to promote awareness in the international community of the nature of the critical economic and social situation in Africa and of the priorities of the New Partnership for Africa's Development;[15]

Role of the Department of Public Information in United Nations peacekeeping

50. *Requests* the Secretariat to continue to ensure the involvement of the Department of Public Information from the planning stage of future peacekeeping operations through interdepartmental consultations and coordination with other departments of the Secretariat, in particular with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations;

51. *Stresses* the importance of enhancing the public information capacity of the Department of Public Information in the field of peacekeeping operations and its role, in close cooperation with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, in the selection process of public information staff for United Nations peacekeeping operations or missions, and, in this regard, invites the Department of Public Information to second public information staff who have the necessary skills to fulfil the tasks of the operations or missions, taking into account the principle of equitable geographical distribution in accordance with Chapter XV, Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, and to consider views expressed, especially by host countries, when appropriate, in this regard;

[15] A/57/304, annex.

52. *Emphasizes* the importance of the peacekeeping gateway on the United Nations website, and requests the Department of Public Information to continue its efforts in supporting the peacekeeping missions to further develop their websites;

53. *Requests* the Department of Public Information and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to continue their cooperation in raising awareness of the new realities, successes and challenges faced by peacekeeping operations, especially multidimensional and complex ones, and of the recent surge in United Nations peacekeeping activities, and welcomes efforts by the two Departments to develop and implement a comprehensive communications strategy on current challenges facing United Nations peacekeeping;

54. *Also requests* the Department of Public Information and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to continue to cooperate in implementing an effective outreach programme to explain the policy of the Organization against sexual exploitation and abuse;

55. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to report to the Committee on Information at its successive sessions on the role of the Department of Public Information in United Nations peacekeeping operations;

Role of the Department of Public Information in strengthening dialogue among civilizations and the culture of peace as means of enhancing understanding among nations

56. *Recalls* its resolutions[16] on dialogue among civilizations and the culture of peace and requests the Department of Public Information, while ensuring the pertinence and relevance of subjects for promotional campaigns under this issue, to continue to provide the necessary support for the dissemination of information pertaining to dialogue among civilizations and the culture of peace, as well as the initiative on the Alliance of Civilizations and to take due steps in fostering the culture of dialogue among civilizations and promoting religious and cultural understanding via all mass media, such as the Internet, print, radio and television, and requests the Secretary-General to submit a report in this regard to the Committee on Information at its successive sessions;

IV
News services

57. *Stresses* that the central objective of the news services implemented by the Department of Public Information is the timely delivery of accurate, objective and balanced news and information emanating from the United Nations system in all four mass media — print, radio, television and Internet — to the media and other audiences worldwide, with the overall emphasis on multilingualism, and reiterates its request to the Department to ensure that all news-breaking stories and news alerts are accurate, impartial and free of bias;

[16] Resolutions 53/22 of 4 November 1998 and 55/23 of 13 November 2000 on the United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations, 52/15 of 20 November 1997, by which it proclaimed 2000 the International Year for the Culture of Peace, 53/25 of 10 November 1998, by which it proclaimed the period 2001-2010 the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 56/6 of 9 November 2001 on the Global Agenda for Dialogue among Civilizations, and 59/142 of 15 December 2004 on the promotion of religious and cultural understanding, harmony and cooperation.

58. *Emphasizes* the importance of the Department of Public Information continuing to draw the attention of world media to stories that do not obtain prominent coverage, through the initiative entitled "Ten Stories the World Should Hear More About";

Traditional means of communication

59. *Stresses* that radio remains one of the most cost-effective and far-reaching traditional media available to the Department of Public Information and an important instrument in United Nations activities, including development and peacekeeping, with a view to achieving a broad client base around the world;

60. *Notes* that the international radio broadcasting capacity for the United Nations is an integral part of the activities of the Department of Public Information, and requests the Secretary-General to make every effort to ensure its success and to report on its activities to the Committee on Information at its twenty-ninth session;

61. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to make every effort to achieve parity in the six official languages in United Nations radio production;

62. *Notes* the efforts being made by the Department of Public Information to disseminate programmes directly to broadcasting stations all over the world in the six official languages, with the addition of Portuguese, as well as in other languages where possible;

63. *Welcomes* the efforts being made by the Department of Public Information to produce and disseminate television news video and feature material to broadcasters around the world through satellite distribution and web delivery;

64. *Requests* the Department of Public Information to continue building partnerships with local, national and regional broadcasters to extend the United Nations message to all the corners of the world in an accurate and impartial way, and also requests the Radio and Television Service of the Department to continue to take full advantage of the technological infrastructure made available in recent years;

United Nations website

65. *Reaffirms* that the United Nations website is an essential tool for the media, non-governmental organizations, educational institutions, Member States and the general public, and, in this regard, reiterates the continued need for efforts by the Department of Public Information to maintain and improve it;

66. *Recognizes* the efforts made by the Department of Public Information to implement the basic accessibility requirements for persons with disabilities to the United Nations website, calls upon the Department to continue to work towards compliance with all levels of accessibility requirements on all pages of the website with the aim of ensuring its accessibility by persons with different kinds of disabilities, and requests the Secretary-General to report to the Committee on Information at its twenty-ninth session on progress made in this regard;

67. *Reaffirms* the need to achieve full parity among the six official languages on United Nations websites while noting with satisfaction that progress is being made to narrow the gap among different official languages on United Nations websites;

68. *Takes note* of the fact that the multilingual development and enrichment of the United Nations website has improved, although at a slower rate than expected owing to several constraints that need to be addressed, and, in this regard, requests the Department of Public Information, in coordination with content-providing offices, to improve the actions taken to achieve parity among the six official languages on the United Nations website;

69. *Welcomes* the cooperative arrangements undertaken by the Department of Public Information with academic institutions to increase the number of web pages available in some official languages, and requests the Secretary-General to explore additional cost-neutral ways to further extend these cooperative arrangements to include all the official languages of the United Nations;

70. *Reaffirms* paragraph 2 of part IX of its resolution 59/276 of 23 December 2004 on proposals to strengthen the United Nations website;

71. *Also reaffirms* its request to the Secretary-General to ensure, while maintaining an up-to-date and accurate website, the adequate distribution of financial and human resources within the Department of Public Information allocated to the United Nations website among all official languages, taking into consideration the specificity of each official language on a continuous basis;

72. *Recalls* paragraph 74 of resolution 60/109 B of 8 December 2005 and, in this regard, reiterates that all content-providing offices in the Secretariat should continue their efforts to translate into all official languages all English language materials and databases posted on the United Nations website in the most practical, efficient and cost-effective manner;

73. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to take full advantage of recent developments in information technology in order to improve, in a cost-effective manner, the expeditious dissemination of information on the United Nations, in accordance with the priorities established by General Assembly resolutions and taking into account the linguistic diversity of the Organization;

74. *Recognizes* that some official languages use non-Latin and bidirectional scripts and that technological infrastructures and supportive applications in the United Nations are based on Latin script, which leads to difficulties in processing non-Latin and bidirectional scripts, and requests the Department of Public Information, in cooperation with the Information Technology Services Division of the Department of Management, to continue its efforts to ensure that technological infrastructures and supportive applications in the United Nations fully support Latin, non-Latin and bidirectional scripts in order to enhance the equality of all official languages on the United Nations website;

75. *Notes with satisfaction* that United Nations webcast services provide live video of United Nations meetings and events, which is also available in the original language in which it is delivered;

76. *Welcomes* the electronic mail-based United Nations News Service, distributed worldwide in the English and French languages through e-mail by the Department of Public Information, and requests the Department as a matter of priority to continue to examine ways to provide this service in all official languages;

77. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to work within the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination and other appropriate

inter-agency bodies to establish a United Nations gateway, an inter-agency search facility in which all entities of the United Nations system should be encouraged to participate, and requests the Secretary-General to report to the Committee on Information at its successive sessions on the activities of the High-level Committee on Management in this regard;

V
Library services

78. *Welcomes* the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Modernization and integrated management of United Nations libraries: update on new strategic directions";[17]

79. *Calls upon* the Department of Public Information to continue to lead the Steering Committee for the Modernization and Integrated Management of United Nations Libraries, and requests the member libraries of the Steering Committee to continue to coordinate closely in the implementation of its programme of work;

80. *Takes note* of the steps taken by the Dag Hammarskjöld Library and the other member libraries of the Steering Committee to align their activities, services and outputs more closely with the goals, objectives and operational priorities of the Organization;

81. *Reiterates* the need to enable the provision of hard copies of library materials to Member States, and notes the efforts of the Secretary-General to enrich, on a multilingual basis, the stock of books and journals in the Dag Hammarskjöld Library, including publications on peace and security and development-related issues, in order to ensure that the Library is enriched and continues to be a broadly accessible resource for information about the United Nations and its activities;

82. *Recognizes* the importance of the depository libraries in disseminating information and knowledge about United Nations activities, and, in this connection, urges the Dag Hammarskjöld Library, in its capacity as the focal point, to continue to take the initiatives necessary to strengthen such libraries by providing regional training and other assistance and by improving their role with the aim of strengthening their support to users in developing countries;

83. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the Committee on Information at its twenty-ninth session on the activities of the Steering Committee and the work of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library, including on the application of measures to enhance the effectiveness of the libraries within existing legislative mandates;

84. *Acknowledges* the role of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library, as part of the Outreach Division of the Department of Public Information, in enhancing knowledge-sharing and networking activities to ensure access to the vast store of United Nations knowledge by delegates, permanent missions of Member States, the Secretariat, researchers and depository libraries worldwide, and takes note of the proposal to rename the library the Dag Hammarskjöld Library and Knowledge-Sharing Centre, reflecting its new direction;

[17] A/AC.198/2006/2.

85. *Notes* the new approaches taken by the Dag Hammarskjöld Library, in particular the Personal Knowledge Management initiative, to assist representatives of Member States and Secretariat staff in the use of information products and tools as a complement to the traditional training programmes;

86. *Recalls* paragraph 44 of its resolution 56/64 B of 24 December 2001, in which it welcomed the role of the Department of Public Information in fostering increased collaboration among libraries of the United Nations system;

VI
Outreach services

87. *Acknowledges* that the outreach services provided by the Department of Public Information continue to work towards promoting awareness of the role and work of the United Nations on priority issues;

88. *Notes* the importance of the continued implementation by the Department of Public Information of the ongoing programme for broadcasters and journalists from developing countries and countries with economies in transition, as mandated by the General Assembly, and requests the Department to consider how best to maximize the benefits derived from the programme by reviewing, inter alia, its duration and the number of its participants;

89. *Welcomes* the movement towards educational outreach and the orientation of the *UN Chronicle*, both print and online editions, and, to this end, encourages the *UN Chronicle* to continue to develop co-publishing partnerships, collaborative educational activities and events, including the "Unlearning Intolerance" seminar series, with civil society organizations and institutions of higher learning;

90. *Reaffirms* the important role that guided tours play as a means of reaching out to the general public, including children and students at all levels;

91. *Welcomes* the efforts undertaken by the Department of Public Information in organizing exhibitions on important United Nations-related issues within existing mandates at United Nations Headquarters and at other United Nations offices as a useful tool for reaching out to the general public;

92. *Requests* the Department of Public Information to strengthen its role as a focal point for two-way interaction with civil society relating to the priorities and concerns of the Organization;

93. *Commends* the United Nations Correspondents Association for its ongoing activities and for its Dag Hammarskjöld Memorial Scholarship Fund, which sponsors journalists from developing countries to come to the United Nations Headquarters and report on the activities during the General Assembly, and urges donors to extend financial support to the Fund so that it may increase the number of such scholarships to journalists in this context;

94. *Expresses its appreciation* for the efforts and contribution of United Nations Messengers of Peace, Goodwill Ambassadors and other advocates to promote the work of the United Nations and to enhance international public awareness of its priorities and concerns, and calls upon the Department of Public Information to continue to involve them in its communications and media strategies and outreach activities;

95. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the Committee on Information at its next session on the activities being carried out by the Department of Public Information to enhance the public image of the Organization, especially where there is a component of the network of United Nation information centres;

VII
Final remarks

96. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that all reports requested by the Committee on Information are submitted and issued in accordance with the legislative mandate;

97. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to report to the Committee on Information at its twenty-ninth session and to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session on the activities of the Department of Public Information and on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the present resolution;

98. *Requests* the Committee on Information to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session;

99. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-second session the item entitled "Questions relating to information".

Draft decision
Increase in the membership of the Committee on Information

The General Assembly decides to increase the membership of the Committee on Information from 108 to 110 and to appoint the Dominican Republic and Thailand as members of the Committee on Information.

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